



Meet the committee **August 2008**

While we're not going to let being award-winning go to our heads, here is a little more about our team. Hopefully many of you out there will be inspired to join us and aim to make a difference at the most important time in new parents' lives.

Lucy: Chair

Describe your role on the committee?

I oversee the branch activities and make sure that we try our best to follow the NCT branch guidelines. I am the UK Office and Regional Team focal point for branch information. To be honest, it doesn't take up much time as I don't have to look up so much information any more as I have done the role for 2 years. Most of the contact is via email which means that I can pick and choose when to answer queries at a time that suits me. I will be standing down at the AGM in November.

Why did you become involved in the NCT?

The branch was on its knees and about to close due to a lack of committee members. I offered to help out over 3 years ago and the rest is history. I really felt that I had got so much from my NCT antenatal classes that it was not fair that the NCT could not continue to offer this and other services locally. I also wanted to encourage more volunteers to get involved with this great charity, we need more all the time.

What has been your most enjoyable moment?

Being at the meeting where our treasurer said that we had raised around £10,000 in one year (last year) and getting the award at conference this year for our Bump and Baby fair which contributed 50% of this amazing fundraising total. It was fantastic working with such a dedicated committee to be one of the most successful fundraising branches in the UK. The feeling of achievement was brilliant

If there is one thing my children have taught me it is ...

don't swear when you are annoyed. My daughter currently says "Shed" when she is annoyed and keeps trying to get me to explain why I mention the garden when I am grumpy, thank goodness for bad pronunciation!

Rachael: Membership Secretary & Publicity Officer

Describe your role on the committee?

I am the Membership Secretary, which I have held since January this year. The role is managing the membership list, maintaining the membership records, welcoming new members to the branch and contacting those whose membership has lapsed to encourage them to stay with the NCT. I also get enquiries from people wanting to know more about the NCT. Most of the work I do is via email and letters and probably takes a couple of hours a month to manage. If I had a couple of more hours I would



develop the role more. I am also Publicity Officer and this involves releasing press releases to the local media and creating press releases for the events we hold. I also email the membership with all the great activities we do. This doesn't take up too much time, HO have sent all Publicity Officers a list of local media contacts to help. There is always more work to do in this role when we have events coming up but generally for most of year it is a quiet role that barely takes up any time.

Why did you become involved in the NCT?

I read Jools Oliver book "Minus 9 months to 1" and that inspired me to book classes and I joined the NCT as a result. I gained so much from the course not only to help me deal with the pregnancy and the labour but with the friendships. Then a letter came from Lucy regarding volunteer positions and I called and arranged to attend the meeting on the 16th August 2006, I remember the date well. I was due on the 18th!! What on earth possessed me to think about joining the committee 2 days before my due date, well I had only finished work on the 11th August and I had been heartbroken leaving the job where I had had a purpose for so long, what on earth was I going to do on maternity leave when I was used to going 100 miles an hour..... naive I know, but I was going into the complete unknown and I needed to know that I was going to be able to contribute to something. My mum had been hugely involved in the NCT in her day and I am so pleased that I made that phone call. I have met so many fantastic people who have achieved as a group fantastic work for the NCT and I am proud of being part of Falkirk and West Lothian NCT

What has been your most enjoyable moment?

Meeting such lovely people and being part of a dynamic and energetic branch

If there is one thing my child has taught me it is ...

that there is nothing in life more important in life than to love and be loved.
Unconditional love exists

Fiona: Branch secretary

Describe your role on the committee?

My main roles are preparing and sending out the agenda to everyone before committee meetings, taking and writing up the minutes from the meetings, uploading them onto the committee and branch Yahoo groups and forwarding information from NCT announce (the national NCT information Yahoo group) to the committee. The role doesn't take up too much time and will only take up a few of hours during a week where there is a committee meeting.

Why did you become involved in the NCT?

After attending antenatal classes then going along to Bumps and Babies and finding out more about the NCT and our branch through the newsletters and some current



committee members I decided that I wanted to become more involved within the branch and the charity. As well as being able to give something back it's been a great way to meet more people.

What has been your most enjoyable moment?

Driving to the Bump and Baby fair and seeing people walking (with their Bump and Baby Fair goodie bags) out of the car park and off down the road to wherever they had parked because the car park was full. The fair was such a great success!

If there is one thing my children have taught me it is ...

that a story and a cuddle is more important to me now than finishing the ironing or dusting the living room. The ironing and dusting will always be there but my children will eventually be too big for a cuddle and a story on my knee.

Lyn: Nearly New Sale Coordinator

Describe your role on the committee?

I coordinate and oversee all the activities for the twice yearly Nearly New Sales from publicising and marketing the events, to booking and preparing the hall, organising and liaising with sellers and volunteer helpers, running the sale on the day and ensuring that the sale is a success. The eight weeks running up to the sales are busy times - initially getting out promotional materials, advertising and posters to publicise the sale, then 6 weeks prior to the sale entering the period of seller registration. During seller registration I log on twice a day and email out sellers packs to potential sellers answering any queries they have. The day of the sale is very busy and exciting, organising sellers and volunteers in the hall and finally the sale itself is the culmination of the eight weeks work. It sounds like a big job but there is a well oiled team in place who help with various aspects of the sale. I will be standing down in November due to increasing family commitments

Why did you become involved in the NCT?

One of my close friends was involved with the NCT committee so I joined up to be a part of the fun and meet other mums in the area. It has been a fabulous forum for meeting people and making new friends. Also the NCT has proved a valuable source of knowledge for all those random baby related questions as there is always someone in the group who either has the answer - or knows someone who does!! Signing up for the Nearly New Sales was also my way of saying thanks to the NCT for the fabulous antenatal courses which are run and ensuring that funding for these continues for other new mums and dads into the future.

What has been your most enjoyable moment?

The final tally for the last Nearly New Sale saw us raising over £2,000 - the highest ever achieved. I also get a great deal of pleasure from knowing that most of Benji's toddler groups have all been decked out with toys from the Nearly New Sale at a fraction of their original in-store cost!



If there is one thing my child has taught me it is ...

Benji has above all taught me patience and the true meaning of absolute love.

Carolynn: Librarian

Describe your role on the committee?

I look after the branch library of books on pregnancy, labour, childcare and related issues. I maintain the catalogue, get books to borrowers and chase up outstanding loans. I hope to do more outreach with the library and go to more antenatal classes and postnatal groups in future. Donations of unwanted books are always welcome!

Why did you become involved in the NCT?

During my pregnancy and the early days of life with a new baby the NCT through its antenatal classes and postnatal groups was a vital source of support and contact with other new Mums - I think in common with many women don't have family in this area and didn't have many friends locally until Susan was born. I wanted to 'give something back' and to make sure this support network was available for other Mums and Dads.

What has been your most enjoyable moment?

The best thing for me about being involved with the NCT has been meeting other Mums at antenatal classes and groups who, with their families, have become close friends and have helped and supported us through very difficult times.

If there is one thing my children have taught me it is ...

The importance of friends and family, the joy of each new day, the beauty of the world around us, to take life one day at a time and celebrate each achievement, not matter how small, on its own terms. Also, that mess can be cleared up, walls can be washed and carpets shampooed and that all that really matters at the end of every day is that everyone is clean, happy, well fed, and asleep!

Elizabeth: Newsletter editor, Website editor and Under 3's Coordinator

Describe your roles on the committee?

I have been the website editor for the past two years and newsletter editor since January, which means that I keep up-to-date with all the issues that are affecting new parents locally and nationally, and look at new ways to spread the news. We are about to look at the way we communicate with our members which will hopefully result in some exciting changes in the ways these roles evolve. I also host the



Under 3's parent, carer and toddler group which is a wonderful opportunity for a blether with friends old and new.

Why did you become involved in the NCT?

I wanted to say thank you to the local branch for all the help and support they gave me when I was planning the birth of my first child. It was great to feel that I was not alone when talking to midwives and hospital managers.

What has been your most enjoyable moment?

Feeling part of a successful and proactive team.

If there is one thing my child has taught me it is ...

that no-one can resist a smile and if nothing else, it makes people wonder what you are up to!

Claire: Newsletter advertising manager

Describe your role on the committee?

Newsletter advertising - selling advertising space and flyer distribution for our quarterly newsletter and Nearly New Sales, creating invoices using the very straightforward NCT online finance system, attending newsletter content discussion meetings (i.e. tea and chat with the editor!). Rough time estimate - 12 hours on a quarterly basis, some daytime requirement for phone calls, some can be evening time for email/invoicing.

Why did you become involved in the NCT?

Attended antenatal classes during my first pregnancy, made great friends on the class, persuaded each other to get involved on the committee!

What has been your most enjoyable moment?

The buzz at the end of my first Nearly New Sale as co-ordinator, closely followed by the buzz at the end of the second when I learnt we'd doubled our 'profit' from the last sale!

If there is one thing my children have taught me it is ...

that it IS possible to survive on less than 6 hours sleep a night, and I might actually long for the day they're teenagers and I have to drag them out of bed...



Joy: Newsletter team and trainee antenatal teacher and newsletter team

Describe your role on the committee?

I am currently one year into my university training to become a qualified antenatal teacher for the NCT. The diploma in antenatal education is validated by the University of Bedfordshire and once qualified I will be able to help and support other parents as well as achieving a recognised academic qualification. I have to attend regular tutorials and study days as well as preparing assignments. The course is demanding but the support I have from my tutor, tutor group, family and branch means I am progressing well and enjoying the training. I am also part of the branch newsletter team working with Claire and Elizabeth compiling *Pitter Patter* the quarterly branch publication.

Why did you become involved in the NCT?

I joined the NCT when I was living in Glasgow and expecting my first child. I was the first person in my group of friends to have a baby and thought the NCT could offer me support and a place where I could meet people in a similar situation to me. When I moved to West Lothian I searched out the local branch as a way to meet new people and discovered the branch was forming a new committee. I joined the committee as newsletter editor and held that post for nearly 3 years.

What has been your most enjoyable moment?

Attending the NCT conference in Glasgow in 2007 shortly after applying to become an antenatal teacher. The day was inspiring and reinforced to me what wonderful work the charity does for babies and families and how through my antenatal training I could become a part of this support network.

If there is one thing my child has taught me it is ...

the most wonderful sound in the world is that of your child laughing and that there is no better feeling than seeing them happy.

Gillian: General member and trainee breastfeeding counsellor

Describe your role on the committee?

I am a general committee member and also a trainee breastfeeding counsellor. My role as a general committee member involves attending about 4 committee meetings a year, and I help out with as many of the fundraising activities as I can which I really enjoy. This doesn't take up a great deal of my time over the course of the year.

Why did you become involved in the NCT?

I initially became involved in the NCT when I attended antenatal classes when pregnant with my first child. Due to the great support I had from the NCT when I was breastfeeding, I decided to train as a Breastfeeding Counsellor so that I could provide



similar support to other parents. I've also made some great friends through my involvement in the NCT. (For more about Gillian's training experiences, read her Spring 2008 which is available on our website)

What has been your most enjoyable moment?

Probably the first Nearly New Sale I helped out at – it was great to be part of an event which raised so much money for the NCT, but it was also great to see the delight on so many of the buyer's faces at the amazing bargains they had got.

If there is one thing my child has taught me it is ...

To chill out a bit and enjoy life at my daughter's pace. I try and plan ahead and allow twice as long to do everything as I would have done before I had her. Then there's no need to get stressed if she decides she wants to dance about for a while with her pants on her head in the middle of getting dressed, or if she wants to stop and talk to every insect she sees when we're walking somewhere. I'm so much more laid back now.